



# MassDEPNEWS

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

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## **Late MassDEP Employee's Lifelong Environmental Career Honored**

### ***'Art Screpetis Brook' Officially Dedicated at Harvard Forest in Petersham***

BOSTON – Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Commissioner Martin Suuberg today joined Harvard Forest Director David Foster to officially dedicate a formerly unnamed tributary in Harvard Forest in memory of Arthur J. “Art” Screpetis, a long-time MassDEP employee and lifelong environmental advocate for the Commonwealth.

The stream, now officially named “Arthur Brook” by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names, is a 1.1-mile headwater stream that flows to Bigelow Brook in the Ware River Watershed. The brook, located in the heart of Harvard Forest in Petersham, encompasses an area that was intimately familiar to Mr. Screpetis in his extensive watershed protection work that spanned generations and resulted in significant advancements in the fields of water quality monitoring and statewide lakes and ponds inventory. This work specifically resulted in the development and implementation of the Massachusetts Watershed Initiative and the Massachusetts Estuaries Program.

“Art was an integral part of the Commonwealth’s earliest efforts to establish water quality monitoring and standards in this state,” **said Commissioner Suuberg.** “His efforts, and the resulting inventories, procedures and policies he developed, remain at the core of MassDEP’s current watershed monitoring program. The naming of this brook in Art’s honor is a fine tribute to a man who dedicated his life to protecting our natural resources.”

“It is a great honor for the Harvard Forest to have the headwater stream running through the heart of our Prospect Hill tract named Arthur Brook,” **said Harvard Forest Director David Foster.** “Art Screpetis captured many personal attributes that are valuable to the Harvard Forest, its scientists and its mission. He combined the gifts of an all-around naturalist with an astonishing scope of knowledge and interests, while taking very seriously the responsibilities of public service in the name of nature and the environment. The granite seat above his brook will provide a lasting memory of his gifts and dedication.”

“Our Commonwealth is very fortunate to have had Art as such a wonderful environmental steward,” **said State Senator Anne Gobi (D-Spencer), Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.** “His lifetime commitment to water quality and conservation set a standard that we must continue to try and meet.”

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“Our region is blessed with some of the highest quality and beautiful waterways in the Commonwealth,” **said State Representative Susannah Whipps (R-Athol)**. “By naming this brook, Art Screpetis’ legacy, as an advocate for our environment, will be known for generations to come.”

Today’s event included a presentation about the “History of Arthur Brook,” along with recollections of Mr. Screpetis and his environmental accomplishments from his family, friends and MassDEP colleagues. The day concluded with a hike through Harvard Forest to Arthur Brook, where a stone bench inscribed with his name is now set within the landscape overlooking the brook.

Mr. Screpetis was a 37-year employee of MassDEP, starting his career with the Commonwealth working for the Division of Water Pollution Control. He was recognized on numerous occasions for his “outstanding service,” including with the prestigious Manuel Carballo Award for Excellence, primarily due to his work on the Massachusetts Watershed Initiative.

He was a native of Dracut, and lived in Lowell for many years before his passing in 2009.



**REMEMBERING ART ...** The memory of Arthur Screpetis was honored with a ceremony at the Harvard Forest Friday, and citations were presented from both the Massachusetts Senate and House. Shown with a photo of Mr. Screpetis are (l-r): MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg, Rep. Susannah Whipps’ legislative aide Melissa Eaton, Arthur’s wife Karen, and Senator Anne Gobi.

(more)





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*Family, friends and MassDEP colleagues of the late Arthur Screpetis gather around the granite seat erected in memory of Mr. Screpetis, overlooking the headwaters of the newly named Arthur Brook within the Harvard Forest in Petersham.*



*Flowers and a memorial plaque mark the seat overlooking the headwaters of Arthur Brook, which was dedicated in honor of past MassDEP scientist Arthur Screpetis.*

MassDEP is responsible for ensuring clean air and water, safe management and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.

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